

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAM-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 SAJ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2618

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LISBON 2392

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: SITUATION AT NOON ON ELECTION DAY

SUMMARY: VOTERS ARE TURNING OUT IN VERY LARGE NUMBERS. NO VIOLENCE YET REPORTED. PEOPLE RELAXED, ORDERLY, PATIENTLY WAITING IN LONG LINES. END SUMMARY.

1. LARGE ORDERLY CROWDS: REPORTS FROM EMBASSY OBSERVERS IN LISBON AND AROUND THE COUNTRY INDICATE THAT VOTERS ARE TURNING OUT EARLY AND IN VERY LARGE NUMBERS. THE WEATHER IS SLIGHTLY OVERCAST IN LISBON BUT CLEAR AND HOT ELSEWHERE. IN LISBON A RELAXED BUT SERIOUS ATMOSPHERE PREVAILS. BLOCK-LONG LINES OF PEOPLE OF ALL AGES HAVE BEEN OUTSIDE OF THE POLLING PLACES--USUALLY SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS--EVEN BEFORE THE POLLS OPENED AT 8 A.M. MOST PEOPLE ARE DRESSED IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST. MANY ARE WEARING RED CARNATIONS--SYMBOL OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APRIL 25 REVOLUTION. CROWDS ARE ORDERLY, AND THERE HAVE BEEN

NO REPORTS THUS FAR OF VIOLENCE OR HARASSMENT. PEOPLE SEEM ANXIOUS TO VOTE EARLY IN ORDER TO ENJOY THE GOOD WEATHER AND THE LONG WEEKEND.

2. ELECTORAL ORGANIZATION GOOD: IT APPEARS THAT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY DESPITE THE COUNTRY'S LACK OF EXPERIENCE WITH HONEST ELECTIONS. MOST SOURCES REPORT SOME SLIGHT DISORGANIZATION AT THE POLLS DUE TO VOTER CONFUSION REGARDING WHICH SECTION THEY SHOULD VOTE IN. THE AVERAGE VOTER IS OBLIGED TO WAIT FOR ONE OR TWO HOURS IN SLOWLY MOVING LINE BEFORE HE CAN GET HIS BALLOT. EMBASSY OBSERVERS REPORT GOOD HUMOR, COURTESY, AND PATIENCE IS THE RULE.

3. FEW TROOPS OR POLICE PRESENT: POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES ARE GENERALLY NOT IN GREAT EVIDENCE IN LISBON, ALTHOUGH SOME ARE SAUNTERING AROUND NEAR THE POLLS IN COIMBRA. MOST TROOPS SEEM TO BE IN THEIR BARRACKS ON LOW LEVEL ALERT IN CASE THEY ARE NEEDED.

4. EXTREMISTS LYING LOW: LEFTIST EXTREMISTS HAVE NOT YET MADE PRESENCE FELT. HOWEVER, THE MRPP HAS SCHEDULED AN ANTI-ELECTION DEMONSTRATION FOR DOWNTOWN LISBON AND OPORTO FOR 5 P.M. TWO HOURS BEFORE THE POLLS CLOSE. THE MILITARY HAS PROMISED TO SQUELCH ANY ATTEMPT TO CREATE DISTURBANCES.
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Message Attributes

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